
E P I S T L E

T O

JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

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E P I S T L E

T O

J A M E S B O S W E L L, E s q.

O C C A S I O N E D B Y H I S

L O N G - E X P E C T E D, A N D N O W

S P E E D I L Y - T O - B E - P U B L I S H E D,

L I F E O F

D R. J O H N S O N.

O R E L E G I T Q U O D C U N Q U E P O T E S T, A T Q U E A D D I T A C E R V O. H O R.

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Printed for J. HOOKHAM, BOND-STREET.

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Harvard College Library
Coulidge Fund
September 13, 1944

JAMES H. WELLS

TO THE READER
BY THE AUTHOR

THE Author hopes the Reader will not so far mis-
-construct the purpose of this Epistle, as to sup-
-pose it intended as a vehicle for illiberality. It is one
of those who laments the deficiency of a well-arranged
Dissertation, on the Life, Genius, and Literary Character
of Dr. Johnson. He considers Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes,
and

T O T H E R E A D E R .

THE Author hopes the Reader will not so far misconstrue the purpose of this Epistle, as to suppose it intended as a vehicle for illiberality. He is one of those who laments the deficiency of a well-arranged Dissertation, on the Life, Genius, and Literary Character of Dr. Johnson. He considers Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes,
and

and Mr. Boswell's Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides, merely as *caricatures* of a man, who deserved better of his friends, than to be placed in so disrespectable a point of view. Sir John Hawkins has certainly been ridiculously minute; and could not even suffer the story of the Brood of *Ducks*, nor the fatality which attended the *odd one*, to remain unnoticed. Such fidelity of narration might have been excused, were not the performance degraded by so many ill-timed censures, on characters entirely unconnected with the subject.—The Author heartily wishes Mr. Boswell success in his present undertaking.—Many examples will induce that Gentleman to remark, that good taste is founded on a certain criterion; and, that its principles may be applied to Biography, equally with any other product of Literature. Had Mr. Murphy originally executed a design of this nature, he would

doubtless have convinced us of the truth of this assertion. The Author sincerely hopes, that the gentle hints of Peter Pindar, and Mr. Boswell's own experience, will so far meliorate this long-promised publication, as to render it, in every respect, worthy the thanks and attention of the Publick.

S I R,

AS a new report of busy Fame,
To public notice elevates your name ;
While printer's devils, with assiduous care,
Cull the choice letters, and the prefs prepare ;
While chaste Biography her skill displays,
Each striking feature of the mind portrays,
Unbends to timely Mirth the Sage's brow,
Severe as Jephtha's, sadd'ning o'er his vow,
While *Bon Mots* gay with graver systems blend,
And each nice touch discriminates your Friend,

B

May

May kindlier Science all her smiles diffuse,
 To bleſs the third-born offspring of thy Muſe * !
 May we extoll thoſe charms, in *her* combin'd,
 Which twice ten years have poliſh'd and refin'd!
 And iſſuing forth (a literary prize),
 Wearing, of thought mature, the ſober guiſe,
 May ſhe deſcend to *Cadell* ! as of old
 Great Jove to Danae, in a ſhower of gold !

E'en now elaps'd a claffic Luſtrum's ſpace,
 Since you ek'd out, with a peculiar grace,
 A book, which narrative Old-age approves,
 Which ſelf-applauding Egotiſm loves,
 Of every wonder-ſeeking reader ſure,
 The Journal of the *Caledonian Tour*.

* The Hiſtory of Corſica, and the Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides, were
 Mr. Boſwell's firſt and ſecond literary productions.

Ah,

Ah, what relief these wakeful eye-balls knew,
 When they had kenn'd *thy last octave* through !
 But how my eager expectation rose,
 When the Appendix ventur'd to disclose,
 " That you, not weary with the rugged road,
 Across which you and Doctor Johnson strode,
 Whom not the *Higbland barren brow affrights*,
 Arduous to climb, as erst, *Pieria's heights* ;
 Not yet content, your future plans t' annul,
 After the tale of oak-stick lost in *Mull* ;
 Not sea-sick with your former fail to *Sky*,
 Opposing storms and adverse winds defy ;
 Again, with unremitting zeal, propose
 A more extensive Journal to dispose,
 With *Thrale* and *Hawkins* waging letter'd strife,
 To paint the chequer'd voyage of Johnson's life.

Much I rejoice, that, in the coming spring,
 The honour'd fage to public view you bring,
 And, scorning to epitomize the man,
 Expand a *quarto* on an ampler plan ;
 While bee-like stores, of gather'd sweets, compleat
 For British taste, a Biographic treat."

This meed to thee belongs, nor Thou refuse
 The courteous offerings of an humble Muse ;
 Her strains degraded by no venal view,
 The chosen subject of their theme pursue,
Lucina-like, give this epistle birth,
 To make an affidavit of thy worth ;
 Prompt, both thy merits and thy faults to weigh,
 Nor these, nor those, shall claim an undue sway,
 Blame unapply'd, or general, marring the cause,
 Unjust alike, as indistinct applause.

But

But first her lays each unfair thought resign,
 And pay their sacrifice at Candour's shrine ;
 Thy former fample, tho' she aims to scan,
 Scorns, through that medium, to abuse the man
 'Tis thus mankind, by sober Prudence taught,
 Amend those ills, which Inexperience wrought ;
 E'en by observing others' failings too,
 Boswell, thy wit may touch the mean so true,
 By shunning each excursive, ill-tim'd tale,
 Rever'd by Hawkins, and spun out by Thrale,
 Thy promis'd page may still ensure success,
 And change its *Higbland*, for an *Attic* dress.

Oh Peter Pindar, best these subjects fit,
 The lively fallies of thy genuine wit,
 Thy song, each garb, as Fancy decks her, wears,
 Thy *ridicule*, the test of Truth appears,

By

By Britain's genius opportunely plac'd,
 To prune our errors, and correct our taste.
 An equal tribute too await those lays,
 Which erst for *Chambers* * wove the classic bays,
 When *Flora*, in fantastic pageants dress'd,
 The charms of Oriental taste confess'd ;
 And saw, where Nature's chaster guise adorns
 The rising swell, the mazy sweep of lawns,
Exotic China's temples intervene,
 And alien *Pagods* variegate the scene.
 Oh, had thy verse, in discontinuous lays,
 To dulcet notes attun'd his growing praise,
 When erst by Father Thames's coal-clad side,
 [Somerset's mansion rose, our boasted pride,

* See the Epistle to Sir W. Chambers, occasioned by his Treatise on Oriental Gardening.

What tho' their airy heights the summits show,
 An equal depth the pile obtains below ;
 Where dank, and dark, as fam'd *Potosi's mine*,
 Imprison'd clerks for Zephyr-breezes pine,
 Desk-worn, and darkling, drudge for scanty pay,
 While noxious vapours drown the joys of day.
 What tho' ! around thy cornice-fringed pile,
 Where all the forms of flowing Sculpture smile,
 The frequent Urns confess thy hand profuse,
 Their purpose dubious, dubious more their use ;
 Each *mystic-meaning* vase, the fabric blots,
 Too fitly nam'd, *Sir William's Chamber-pots*.
 Leave not un Sung, this *celebrated pair*,
 Famous, for building castles in the air,
This, who the prize, by Architecture won,
This too, Biography thy *ELDER SON* ;

To

To fables *this, this* to distinctions prone,
 Knighted for reasons to himself best known.
 Yet if, th' employ, it wills thee to resign,
 Too vent'rous I, to make thy labours, mine !
 With feeblér aim, aspire to disengage,
 Johnson's sad reliques, from each motley page ;
 Though bright each scatter'd beam, their gather'd rays,
 Drawn to one point, with social ardour blaze.

Boswell, ere yet you stow your stores abroad,
 (As yet, at anchor thou, and safely moor'd)
 An ample cargo, of unusual weight,
 Various, as India captain's Chinese freight ;
 Ere yet, thy cable quit the well-known ground,
 Ere yet thy plummet lose the measur'd found,

Ere

Ere Expectation spreads her eager sails,
 Foretells success, and courts the swelling gales;
 Ere yet, from port thy first-rate vessel glide,
 Let *Wit*, and *Judgement*, at the helm preside.
 Diomed, with two whips supply'd by calm Discretion,
 (The tale is Homer's), pray excuse digression,
 Urg'd on his eager couriers to the race,
 And brought his car within the given space.
 Thy bow, thus doubly-strung, obey this rule,
 Thou classic lover of Minerva's school;
 In constant view a two-fold quadrant keep,
 To point your bearings thro' the treacherous deep;
 No ill-judged speed, the compass should exclude,
 Whole magnet virtue points our latitude:
 With all these nautic requisites supply'd,
 The fav'ring gales, shall smooth th' opposing tide;

C

Nor

Nor will th' attempt, the timely purpose fail,
 When, round Life's ocean, you with Johnson fail.
 Boswell, no more thy *logbook journal*, which
 Infects us all with anecdotic itch ;
 Thy treasur'd hoard of tales, which nicely fit
 Thy genius, teeming with excursive wit,
 No more must they, provoking critic rage,
 Disgrace the theme of thy historic page :
 For, while such pleasantries, thy judgement flatter,
Olla Podrida so involves the matter,
 We, like *that* Sultan *, charm'd by alien themes,
 Lull'd by his fabling bride's *Arabian dreams*,
 Our vow'd intent forego, each hour beguile,
 Tranc'd by romantic Fancy's magic smile ;

* Alluding to the story which explains the origin and intent of the Arabian
 Nights-Entertainments.

But

But lose the man, whose comprehensive lore,
 Dar'd the extremes of Learning's bounds explore,
 And by enlighten'd Truth's unerring clue,
 Each mazy labyrinth of doubt pursue.

As then, I wish to see thy labours raise
 A votive monument to Johnson's praise,
 Thy twice ten years, of long and patient toil,
 Mature the knowledge of this happy isle,
 And view, with hope sincere, thy laurel'd brow,
 Crown'd with the honours of the Delphic bough;
 A gentle hint, or two, shall not offend,
 Nor thou, confound the *satyrist*, with the *friend*.
 Oh tell no more; "*how, in the ev'ning late,*
At Boyd's Inn, at the head of Cannon-gate,

Johnson arriv'd; clad, as he travell'd down,*
In a plain ditto suit of russet brown,
The buttons of like colour with the cloaths,
His buckles silver, black his worsted hose:
His head appear'd Gorgonically big,
In bushy honours of a grizzle wig:
How, on the journey which he took with you,
Booted he was, and wore a vast surtout,
Whose pockets would contain an ample olio,
Two volumes of his Dictionary Folio;
And in his hand he bore a British oak,
Which buds at Mull, and forms a pleasant joke.

* Mr. Boswell's Journal, p. 9.—He wore a full suit of plain brown cloaths, with twisted hair buttons of the same colour; a large bushy greyish wig; a plain shirt; black worsted stockings, and silver buckles. Upon this Tour, when journeying, he wore boots, and a very wide, brown, cloth great coat, with pockets which might have almost held two volumes of his folio Dictionary; and he carried in his hand a large oak stick; by and by, my readers will find this stick will bud, and produce a good joke.

*How, at the inn, his lemonade to sweeten *,*
(For which the waiter nearly had been beaten,)
Tb' unseemly Scot, about all scruples easy,
Popp'd in the sugar with his fingers greasy,
The Doctor choleric, throwing down the whole,
Made a libation of the baleful bowl.
Or how, Veronica, a Flemish name †,
Countess of Kincardine, expands thy fame,
All'd to thy forefathers, stamps on thee,
The honours of a two-fold pedigree.
Or how you scrupled tarrying in the room,
To sit in company with David Hume ‡;

* P. 12. He wished to have his lemonade made sweeter; upon which the waiter, with his greasy fingers, lifted a lump of sugar, and put into it. The Doctor, in indignation, threw it out of the window.

† The Saint's name of Veronica was introduced into our family, through my great-grand-mother Veronica, Countess of Kincardine, a Dutch lady of the noble house of Sommelfdyck, &c.

‡ P. 21. Besides, I have always lived on good terms with Mr. Hume, though I have frankly told him, I was not clear it was right in me to keep company with him.

Speak

Speak for yourself, you best can tell the tale :
With Adam Smith, what motive could prevail ?
Hume's History's initial page to better,
By writing then a panegyric letter,
Each sentence with such commendation fraught,
That, kenning what my old Professor taught,
I have, cry'd I, with Psalmist's holy preachers,
*More understanding surely, than my teachers *.*
Boswell, let this suffice ; yet, one word more,
Then we'll erase this anecdotic score ;
No more an echo, faithful to disclose,
Where Johnson spit, when Johnson blew his nose :

* The whole of this passage is so remarkable, that it is more eligible to give it in Mr. Boswell's own words : " When I read this sentence, delivered by my old " Professor" (meaning the learned and ingenious Dr. Adam Smith), " I could " not help exclaiming with the Psalmist, Surely I have now more understanding " than my teachers."

Should

*Should you perchance indulge in too much grog *,
 Note not, the Doctor calls you, " Drunken Dog ;"
 Prescribes a dram, to mitigate your pain,
 And cries to Corry, " Fill him drunk again :"
 That, to atone the sin, you next repair
 To your friend's room, and ope the Book of Prayer †,
 Where opportunely found, these words express,
 With wine be drunk not, wherein is excess,*

P. 310. I awaked at noon with a severe head-ach. I was much vexed I should have been guilty of such a riot, and afraid of a reproof from Dr. Johnson. About one *he* came into my room, and accosted me, " What, drunk yet ?"—" Sir," said I, " they kept me up." He answered, " No, you kept them up, you *Drunken Dog*." Soon afterwards, *Col. Cernichatachin*, and other friends, assembled in my bed-room, Corry had a brandy-bottle with him, and insisted I should take a dram—" Ay," said Dr. Johnson, " fill him drunk again."

† When I arose, I went into Dr. Johnson's bed-room, and taking up Mrs. M'Kinnon's Prayer-Book, I opened it at the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, in the Epistle for which I read, " And be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess." Some would have taken this as a Divine Interposition.

Which

Which bear to you the proofs of their commission,

Alluding to Divine Interposition.

Next mark, how by such idle stories fail,

The plans of Hawkins, and of Mrs. Thrale;

E'en, may each novel joke, so well exprest,

Eke out Joe Millar, with another jest:

Then let us Boswell candidly engage,

In scanning *Hawkins's* many-colour'd page;

And while we, for our own instruction look,

Revere the man, but analyse the book.

Lo! first, the tragic fate, and ill-starr'd luck,

Which crush'd the embryo form, of Master Duck;*

Ab what avails! that erst with duckling gabble,

Instinctive Nature, taught thy tongue to babble:

* Vide Sir John Hawkins's Life of Dr. Johnson, p. 6.

Happier

*Happier thy lot, than if when bounteous Spring
 Profusely deigns her choicest peas to bring,
 A victim thou hadst bled, without a name,
 Unknown, unsung, by anecdotic fame,
 When little Johnson, in his fourth-year's dawn,
 O'ercasts thy infant hopes, the sunshine of thy morn.
 Here * Gormund Wood, extoll'd by his Recorder,
 A poet of the water-drinking order,
 Threatens as much black-pudding to devour,
 Within the compass of his dinner-bour,
 As, when the threads the kneaded mass entwine,
 Would cross the Thames, in discontinuous line.
 Lo Doctor Birch, with patient step around †,
 Before his breakfast, measures London's ground;*

* Vide p. 142.

† P. 207.

Its space, its bounds, precisely he defines,
Without great Euclid's geometric lines.
With sage remark to intersperse the olio,
*The Doctor knocks down Osborne with a folio *.*
Here, Drury represents Irene's fate,
Irene, dight in Asiatic state;
Behind the scenes, her beaux-like bard, full dress,
Beam'd in the spangles of a gold-lac'd vest †.
Here Johnson's hurried to Oblivion's grave:
For why? to contemplate the Printer Cave,
Who, buoy'd up by the sale of Magazines,
A thriving Cit, affects politer scenes,
Profusely gilt, new-letter'd, and revis'd,
The old edition cast off, and despit'd,

* Vide p. 150.

† P. 199. Johnson was behind the scenes, and, thinking the character of an author required some mark of distinction, appeared in a gold-laced waistcoat.

No more on foot he squeezes thro' the throng ;
Urban indeed, he drives his coach along,
His pannels making Apostolic state,
*Blazon the Mural crest of St. John's Gate * :*
 Ah ! happy he ! who did not live to feel
 The ten-pounds tax which now obstructs the wheel.
 Would'st thou the palm in criticism bear ?
 Read then ! what I can scarce with patience hear ;
 Mark well those comments, which, if true, indeed
 Would damn both Richardson's and Fielding's † Creed :

For

* The story is too long for insertion ; but the whole equipage of *Sylvanus Urban* is minutely described ; and the reason given which induced Mr. Cave to decorate his pannels with a painting of St. John's Gate.

† Vide p. 214.—Take Sir John Hawkins's own words. Speaking of Fielding :
 " This man was a writer of farces, few of which are now read ; then an anti-ministerial writer ; and then a creature of the Duke of Newcastle, who gave him a nominal qualification to set up as a Trading Justice. He was the author of *Tom Jones*, a book seemingly intended to sap the foundation of that morality which it is

For here, Tom Jones, *divested of perfections,*

Resolves all virtue into good affections ;

Goodness of heart supplies his morals, beauty,

In contradiction to the sense of duty.

Grandison, Pamela, and Clarissa fail *,

Their merits weigh'd in the impartial scale,

Nor

the duty of parents to inculcate. His morality, in respect that it resolves all virtue into good affections, in contradiction to moral obligation, and a sense of duty, is that of Lord Shaftesbury vulgarised; a system of excellent use in palliating vices most injurious to society. He was the inventor of that cant phrase, "Goodness of heart;" which is every day used as a substitute for probity; and means little more than the virtue of a horse and a dog. In short, he has done more towards corrupting the rising generation, than any writer we know of.—These are Sir John Hawkins's liberal comments on Fielding; whose works will continue to be admired long after the time which shall have consigned this *specimen of biography* to those honours, which *Horace* appropriates to such productions:

' ——— in vicum, vendentem thus, et odores,

' Et piper, et quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.'

Epist. I. Lib. 2.

* Vide p. 217. Others there are who think that neither his Pamela, Clarissa, or Grandison, are to be numbered among the books of rational and instructive amusement ;

Nor can in Admiration's eye engage
With chaste narrations of Gil Blas's Le Sage ;
'Mid their false views of manners, intervene
A thin, a flimsy style, a texture mean ;
The youthful heart, to specious Vice allure,
Tho' bad their moral which affects the cure.
 Of Fielding then, and Richardson, beware
Wards of Sir John, ye boys, ye British fair ;
 In rapturous dreams, *they* bid your passions flow,
 And the soft influence of sensation glow ;
 Gloss o'er each crime, and fann the rising flame,
 Invite with *Sentiment's* delusive name ;

ment ; that they are not to be compared to the novels of Cervantes, or the more simple and chaste narration of *Le Sage*. The texture of his writings is *flimsy and thin* ; his *style mean and feeble*. Though they pretend to a moral, it often turns out to be a bad one. The cant term of him and his admirers, is *sentiment and sentimentality*. Indeed, Sir John Hawkins is peculiarly happy in a new mode of conveying his opinions ; and has, with great address, made his *Life of Dr. Johnson* a vehicle for them.

Bid

Bid the full pulse, with big emotions beat,
 And subtly quicken in the magic heat,
 Inform each wish, and teach each warm desire,
 To court, like Semele, the fatal fire.

Here stay thy flight, my inexperience'd Muse,
 A temperate candour best commends thy use ;
 No lawless Saturnalia should provoke,
 Untemper'd by applause the festive joke ;
 And blush, tho' haste now flutters on thy wing,
 Unmix'd by praise, thy censuring jeers to fling :
 Happy each trait of merit to discern,
 From *Parson Adams*, due forbearance learn ;
 Generous and just, to no one sect confin'd,
His feeling heart was warm for all mankind,
 Though *Truth* his object, 'twas his fixt decree,
 To drop a tear to *human frailty*.

We

We knew the solace which thy heart supply'd,
 We knew the virtues of thy *fireside* ;
 Thy sympathy, thy firm and steady zeal,
 Warm'd into generous glow for *Johnson's* weal ;
 Thy counsel sweet, effective to bestow
 Those fond endearments which from Friendship flow ;
 When *Genius*, struggling with ill-fated woes,
 Panted her full-blown vigour to disclose,
 Eager her untry'd pinions to expand,
 Chill'd by the grasp of *Penury's* icy hand.
 Or when desponding thoughts their pangs impart,
 Or fears mis-featur'd agitate the heart ;
 When wavering Faith, by conscious Guilt oppress'd,
 Haunted, with sceptic doubt, the troubled breast ;
 To thee, t' allay these torturing woes was giv'n,
 To point, with purpose firm, the surer Heav'n,

Friend,

Friend, in that hour of need ; at thy controul,
 Calm Resignation repossess his soul ;
 'Till, as the Sun's beams pierce the glooms of night,
 Dawn into day, and brighten into light,
 Those ghastly phantoms of Despair are fled,
 Those visionary dreams of Terror, sped ;
 No more does troubled Fancy's fickle view,
 Pourtray those shadowy tints of darker hue ;
 But Faith, with cross-uprear'd, and step serene,
 With ardent eye, and Patience sober mien,
 To rapture, kindles Hope's enliv'ning ray,
 And gilds the prospect, of the closing day.

Mark ! how the *ingenious Dame of Streatham* *, paid
 Her obsequies to *Doctor Johnson's* shade ;

* Vide Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson.

She,

She, wrapt in admiration, oft had hung
 O'er wond'rous accents of his magic tongue ;
 While, in her ear those fairy echoes play,
 And o'er her fond imagination stray,
 While, such collective stores her memory fill,
 Ah, say ! could *woman possibly be still* !
 For public view, her plastic Fancy drest
 Anew, each *threadbare, Canterbury* jest :
 Oh *Lady*, say ! by what name shall I quote ye ?
 By *Mrs. Thrale*, or *Italiz'd Piozzi* ?

Ye Fair, with kindlier charms, by Nature grac'd
 For other studies, cultivate a taste ;
 Aim not, to wield the literary pen ;
 Leave *Hebrew, Greek, and Latin*, all to men :

E

Unless

Unless a *Carter* *, by *Ilyssus*'s stream,
 Awake the warm, enthusiastic theme ;
 Bid each *stern Sage*, his *Stoic* worth display,
 And *Epicletus* moralize the lay.
 The silk-strung *needle* paints the violet blue,
 The lily pale, the tulip's rosy hue ;
 The busy, imitative pencil, vies
 With beauteous *Iris*'s many-colour'd dyes,
 While light and shade, their meet accordance give,
 As Joy to Grief, and bid the picture live.
 'Tis yours, the captive passions to command,
 And tune to Harmony with *Minstrel* hand,
 Which, as the notes a softer mood inspire,
 Strikes a new language, to the living lyre.

* See Mrs. Carrer's excellent translation of *Epicletus*.

'Tis

'Tis yours to shew, in conscious virtue great,
 Vice has no less your pity, than your hate,
 Still to preserve the charmer in the wife,
 And add a dignity to social life.

Permit me, *Boswell*, to remark to thee,
 Another *failing* of *Biography*:
 Too oft the annals of her *storied* page
 In subjects, foreign to their views, engage;
 She, prompt to bid the unexperienc'd youth,
 At Virtue's altar, light the lamp of Truth,
 Too oft forbids these tragic scenes to close,
 Which tearful Pity lulls to long repose.
 If *false* his *theory*, just the critic law,
 Tries well its claims, and pays no servile awe;
 His *practice* frail, let generous Candour scan
 With Sympathy, the errors of the man;

Least the big sigh, should heave some kindred breast,
 Which patient Resignation hush'd to rest ;
 From the dim eye, the tear unbidden steal,
 And Memory, the touch of Sorrow, feel.
 To him, whose precept would a rule impart
 To mould the manners, and to form the heart,
 The drama first, her scenic aid supplies,
 Or fabling Fancy's allegoric dyes,
 Or griefs, with which the historic scenes expand,
 Griefs, on which Time has laid her healing hand ;
 Not thine, *Biograpby*, to feign a zeal
 For man ; and all his frailties to reveal :
 Stay then that moral *, eager to disclose,
 Too recent Misery's fresh and bleeding woes ;

* These lines were occasioned by some very ill timed remarks on the Life and Character of an unfortunate Gentleman ; for whose abilities Dr. Johnson always professed the highest esteem.

Curs'd

Curs'd its *cold caution*, as that beacon's ray,
 Too feebly bright, to point the better way,
 Looks down, when prosperous gales have ceas'd to blow,
 On adverse storms, which wreck the bark below.

Deem not, the *Muse* severe in *moody spleen*,
 Thy *Handmaid she*, with frugal care would glean,
 The fields with *wild oats*, and with *weeds* o'ergrown,
 Which *Johnson's husbandmen* have idly sown ;
 Left, rank in vicious growth, they choak the soil,
 And once more, *Boswell*, disappoint thy toil :
Her faintly-glowing colours, aim to paint,
False wit, in all her playful fancies quaint,
False taste, to hold forth to the test of day,
 Dight in *conceit*, in *Tuscan pageant* gay ;
 Not, with a *Nero's* scorn, aloof to gaze,
 Light up the brand, and triumph o'er the blaze.

Here is her task resign'd : t' assist the cause,
 To form a code of biographic laws,
 Their rules approv'd, thy own example make,
 And *either Warton* * for a model take :
 What, tho' the one bade *Poetry* expand,
 Her *embryo seeds*, and bloffoms o'er the land,
 What tho' his Genius bade great Milton's Muse
 In chaster guise, each native grace diffuse ;
 Let not *Oeconomy's* unseemly deed,
 Withhold from *Horace* the *Augustan* meed,
 Nor *Parsimony's* sparing hand keep back
 Queen Bess's New-Year's-Gift, the *butt of sack*,
 Tho' fail'd the *Ode*, those *Lyric tunes* to sing,
 Which charm, and captivate, our gracious King.

Boswell, to trespass farther on your time,
 Were sure impertinence, if not a crime :

* Vide Essay on the Life, Writings, and Genius of Pope.

To you, the Britons a *choice task* resign,
 And wait the effort of the *grand design* ;
 Foretell the day, when forth to public view,
 The *copy* faithful, and the *semblance* true,
 With animation full, the *bust* shall stand,
 Touch'd into life by thy *Promethean* hand,
 On Parian base, 'mid British *worthies* plac'd,
 A well-wrought model of true Phydian taste.

Enough, no more by *Johnso-mania* smit,
 Or wild, in fallies of excursive Wit,
 Let quaint *Conceit* display her gaudy crest,
 Or *Egotism*, her self-embroider'd vest ;
 Nor, *tales portentous*, of *old-women* bred,
 What time the *Gnomes*, their elfin fancies sped,
 Wed in alliance ; nor the work disgrace,
 With *Flemish farce*, and scenery out of place,

Least

Least, like the wild confusion of a dream,
Mis-featur'd Chaos, mask the motley theme.

As when in search of monuments of art,
 Which, e'en thy ruins, sacred Greece, impart,
 Where Architecture, with Vitruvian toil,
 And varied orders, deck'd the fancy'd pile,
 Bade figur'd columns leafy brows sustain
 Rever'd Mythology thy votive fane,
 Lo ! her *mis-shapen* pillars still are seen,
 Faintly to shew, what *Corinth* once has been.
 Or, would the *Deletanti's* curious eye,
 The portico of Academe descry,
 Where Truth, her new-born light, in part reveal'd,
 In part from Plato, and from Greece conceal'd,
 In vain the search ; amid promiscuous piles
 Th' *unwelcome mosque*, unfolds her Pagan aisles,

Her

Her alien *tribes*, scarce leave one genuine trace,
 One mournful *vestige*, of each attic grace.

Great sage, t' approve my parting tribute, deign,
 Nor deem this verse-encypher'd off'ring vain ;
 Say ? Shall this requiem o'er thy hallow'd tomb,
 Bid, full with life, thy fainted virtues bloom ?
 A *stranger's hand* thy obsequies compose,
 Collect thy reliques, and each part dispose ?
 With pious care, and holy zeal, return
 Thy *scatter'd* ashes, to their proper urn.

Thy well-earn'd Wisdom, of exhaustless store,
 Temper'd by Reason's philosophic lore ;
 Thy Virtue pure, with ampler moral freight,
 Could reach the practice, which her precepts taught ;

F

These,

These, each on each, a light alternate throw,
And, with reflected beams of splendour, glow.

Thine are the varied views, which unconfin'd
Expatiate freely o'er the human mind,
Offsprings of musing thought, they fitly show
What, we to each prescriptive duty owe.

Thy nice distinctions, curious to divide
What, coarse conceptions had too near ally'd;
To each word, limit the idea due,
And, from false notions, separate the true.
Whence her fair being Virtue's self assumes?
Which happier sect, on surer proofs presumes?
Does she, from moral Sense, her *essence* draw,
From *Shaftesbury's* characteristic law?

Or, from *thy system's* more endearing hue,
 O *Clarke* * ? from mutual *obligations* due ;
 Society, such *interchanges* join,
 Attract the *whole*, and into *one* combine,
 While *rights* and *duties*, well observ'd ally
 The moral compact, and confirm the tie.
 Thy *Wit*, (each *system* pois'd in equal scale,)

Pierces dark *Sophistry's* mysterious veil ;
 Thy reasonings deep, by Heav'n-born Truth imprest,
 Direct concretion to the *sceptic* breast.
 Unaided lo ! the *metaphysic* eye
 No farther dares the *dark abyss* to try ;
 Of *sanction'd evil*, to explore the source,
 Or trace the labyrinths of her devious course :

* Dr. Johnson was a favourer of Clarke's system.

The *Academic Moralist* retires,
 The firmer Christian fans the holy fires,
 Marks, how to each, of lab'ring Nature's woes,
 A *twin-born aid*, the *moral good* * bestows.

Let *deslin'd* empire to the Westward tend,
 Or vassal'd Europe to a conqueror bend,
 Tho' *Learning* sink beneath her Gothic foes,
 Or more, than Turkish ignorance, oppose.
 Hence *infant* Science shall her stores increase,
 As erst from Egypt, Italy, or Greece ;
 She, like the diamond's lustre, near expires,
 Tho' hid her radiance, tho' obscur'd her fires,
 Her vestal lamp, lights up a ceaseless ray,
 Darts thro' the gloom, and brightens into day.

* Vide N^o 89 of the *Idler* ; a most perspicuous and excellent paper, written expressly on this subject, entitled, "*Natural Evil*, the Cause of *Moral Good*."

In reckless tumult, if in *ages* hence,
 Gigantic *Barbarism's* reign commence ;
 If mid progressive Learning's toilsome years,
 Chequer'd by flattering hopes, or anxious fears,
 Should, 'mid her letter'd triumphs, intervene,
 The dreary dullness of the cloyster'd scene,
 Where moody *Sloth*, in lonely cell sedate,
 Counts the slow passive hours, of ling'ring Fate,
 (Each thought, each active virtue long resign'd,)
 Stagnates the genial current of the mind ;
Those, in that age, (like Bacon fam'd of yore),
 Who first, faint Science's darkling maze explore,
 On *thy enliv'ning light*, shall gaze afar,
 And own *thy radiance* for, their *polar star*,
 Which, in their Heav'ns fixt, with kindly gleam,
 Ope thro' the ambient mist, a chearing beam ;

Whose

Whose *influence*, shall the new-born theme controul,
 Whose *genius* animate, inform the whole,
 And consecrate, thro' wide-extending climes,
 (Wrought on the storied shrine of after-times,)
 The incense due, the high applause *you* claim,
 From *votive* annals of recording Fame.

F I N I S.